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FACTORIES HIT AS CHINA PUSHES FOR EMISSION GOAL

Power guzzling units forced shut as China seeks to tackle coal supply shortage and climate goals ahead of the Winter Games

CHINESE GDP TO TAKE 1 PERCENTAGE POINT HIT

Analysts revisited growth projections because of the curbs amid post-pandemic economic rebound, with some expecting China's GDP to take a 1 percentage point hit. Globally, expect a shortage of mobile phones and gadgets ahead of the Christmas season, as most units will remain shut for exceeding consumption quota under a strict carbon credit system

GLOBAL MANUFACTURERS TO SUFFER

- This clampdown adds to the burden of global manufacturers reeling under the weight of chip shortage, logistics concerns and the lingering effect of the pandemic-driven global slowdown
- But Nomura economists saw a silverlining, saying the long-term benefits of the curbs outweigh the short-term economic costs

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ENERGY INTENSIVE UNITS SHUT; POWER CUTS IN 14 CITIES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Farmers' bandh hits normal life at many places

Shops shut, public transport off roads in Punjab, Haryana, Kerala

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NORMAL life was thrown out of gear on Monday in several parts of the country as farmer unions blocked highways and roads, and squatted on railway tracks as part of a 10-hour shutdown to protest against the Centre's agri laws. Thousands of people were stranded on the roads for hours, especially in the Delhi National Capital Region. Several trains were cancelled in Delhi, Ambala and Firozpur divisions.

The impact of the bandh was felt in Delhi NCR, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of 40 farmer unions, claimed the strike was a success and no untoward incident was reported from anywhere. Emergency services were not affected as the morcha had issued specific instructions in this regard. In Punjab, farmers held dharnas at about 500 venues. A complete shutdown was observed in the state with transport services being suspended and commercial establishments shut. In Kerala, where the strike was supported by both the ruling CPM and the opposition Congress, shops were shut and public transport was hit.

Protests were also seen in West Bengal, where the Left Front backed the call for a shutdown. Reacting to reports of massive traffic jam in Delhi-NCR, BKU leader Rakesh Tikait said those who faced inconvenience due to the shutdown should forget it for the farmers' sake. "Some people may have faced inconvenience due to the Bharat Bandh, which is natural, but they should forget it for just one day in the name of farmers," Tikait said.

The union leader added that in a democracy, there is no other option but to protest and warned the government that the farmers would go back to their homes only after the laws are abolished. P10

Farmers, activists and members of Kannada organisations, trade unions and civil society take out a protest march as part of Bharat Bandh, amid heavy police deployment, in Bengaluru on Monday | ASHISHKRISHNA MP | P2

Lukewarm response in Karnataka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Bharat Bandh call given by Samyukta Kisan Morcha protesting against the Centre's farm laws evoked a lukewarm response across Karnataka on Monday, while some parts experienced traffic snarls. The bandh was limited to rallies and protests, without affecting business or transport.

In Bengaluru, too, the bandh had little effect with all modes of transport and businesses running as usual. As farmers took out a rally, traffic was thrown out of gear despite the traffic police diverting vehicular movement.

Thousands of farmers and members of various organisations marched from Town Hall to Mysuru Bank Circle. The police had beefed up security across Bengaluru and deployed additional forces at bus stations and railway stations.

Kodihalli Chandrashekhar, president, Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene, said people of Karnataka supported the bandh. "Although the government ran its buses and offices as usual and the police detained many protesters, the people of the state supported our cause by staying home. In Bengaluru, thousands of people took part in the rally. The bandh was successful in the state," he added.

Students of Mysore University boycotted classes and formed a human chain to support the agitation.

In Mysuru, Mandya, and Chamarajanagar districts, hundreds of farmers blocked entry gates of KSRTC and private bus stations till 9 am and forced traders to pull down shutters. Police and protesters entered into a wordy duel when agitators threatened shop owners.

In Kalaburagi, activists blocked the entrance of Central Bus Stand in the morning, following which the Kalyana Karnataka Region Transport Corporation withdrew buses up to 2 pm. P4

Centre gets it for changing NEET PG exam pattern

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday slammed the Centre for making last-minute changes to the exam pattern of Post-graduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Super Specialty (NEET-SS), 2021.

"The young doctors cannot be at the mercy of insensitive bureaucrats and cannot be treated like a football," a bench of justices D Y Chandrachud and B V Nagarthana said.

The court had last week issued notices to the Central government and the National Medical Council (NMC) on a plea by postgraduate doctors over last-minute changes to the exam pattern.

NEET-SS is scheduled to be held on November 13 and 14, the dates for which were notified on July 23. However, the testing agency announced a syllabus change on August 31 through a bulletin.

"Why after the exam notification? Why cannot it be made from next year. Students prepare for months for such exams. We will hear you, but we are dissatisfied with the authorities. Just because you have power you are wielding it like this. Please speak to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to look into this," said Justice Chandrachud.

Justice Nagarathna said the new syllabus looked more like a final exam than an entrance test. "If you change it (pattern) suddenly, what will happen? This does not look like an entrance, but a final exam," Justice Nagarathna said.

At this, senior advocate Maninder Singh and the National Board of Examination's (NBE) counsel submitted the changes were well-considered and enforced after necessary approvals.

Be open to strictures, SC warns Centre

Justice Chandrachud observed the Centre should be open to strictures of SC if the latter does not agree with the authorities. The bench slated the hearing for next Monday

RSS WEEKLY SLAMS AMAZON, LIKENS IT TO A COLONISER

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AFTER its blistering attack on infotech major Infosys recently, Hindi magazine *Panchajanya*, which is linked to the RSS, lit into e-commerce retail behemoth Amazon, likening it to British colonisers and calling it 'East India Company 2.0', in its upcoming edition.

Amazon quickly rebutted the allegations, explaining how it has offered its platform to a large number of small grocery stores and exporters to sell their goods and services.

The latest *Panchajanya* cover story has its genesis in a recent whistleblower complaint against Amazon allegedly bribing Indian government officials, funneling the dirty money under the head of legal fees. The report examines "how Amazon resorts to bribery, and why it poses a risk to the entrepreneurship of the country, besides prestige, culture and economic freedom of India," its editor Hitesh Shankar said.

It claimed at least 40,000 small shops in India have shut down because of Amazon's expanding footprint. The article is in line with concerns within RSS affiliates of the growing influences of e-commerce platforms in consumer behaviour at the cost of neighbourhood outlets.

Amazon claimed it was empowering *kirana* stores and connecting individual artisans and exporters with the global market. It said over three lakh sellers boarded its platform during the pandemic, which included 75,000 neighbourhood shops.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said, "The kind of allegations on Amazon that have come to light are very serious and cannot be ignored."

COVID CONTAINMENT MEASURES

- Prohibitory orders to contain the spread of Covid-19 in Bengaluru extended till **October 11**
- Night curfew will be in force from **10 pm to 5 am** during the said period
- Assembly of more than four persons in public places and activities, other than those permitted under norms, prohibited
- Bengaluru Police Commissioner Kamal Pant has prohibited all movements/activities, except those permitted by government
- Essential services like bus stands, Metro stations, and the airport exempt from the order
- Violators will face action under the Disaster Management Act, 2005; Karnataka Epidemic Diseases Act, 2020; and also Section **188** of the IPC

PUSH FOR STARTUPS

Task force soon to frame R&D policy for K'taka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hubballi

CHIEF Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday announced the constitution of a task force to frame new research and development policy for the State. KLE Technological University Vice-Chancellor Prof Ashok Shettar will head the task force. Bommai has also planned to set up coordinating centres at Hubballi and Kalaburagi to ensure the benefits of the startup policy are taken to places out of Bengaluru.

Inaugurating a Tech Park at the KLE Technological University campus to mark flagging off of the platinum jubilee of BVB College of Engineering and Technology (BVBCET), Bommai said the State is known for taking initiatives to encourage R&D. Because of this, around 180 public and private enterprises, including multi-national ones, have been operating in and around Bengaluru.

The R&D sector is the core of industrial growth in the State, the CM said, adding that to unleash the potential further, he has planned to frame a new policy. It will help push innovations in every sector, particularly agriculture and food, in coordination with institutions and industries, he said. P7

TAKE YOUR SHOT

NATIONWIDE	SEPT 26	SEPT 27
Fresh cases	28,326	26,041
Recoveries	1,058	29,620
Deaths	260	276

KARNATAKA	SEPT 26	SEPT 27
Fresh cases	775	504
Recoveries	860	893
Deaths	9	20

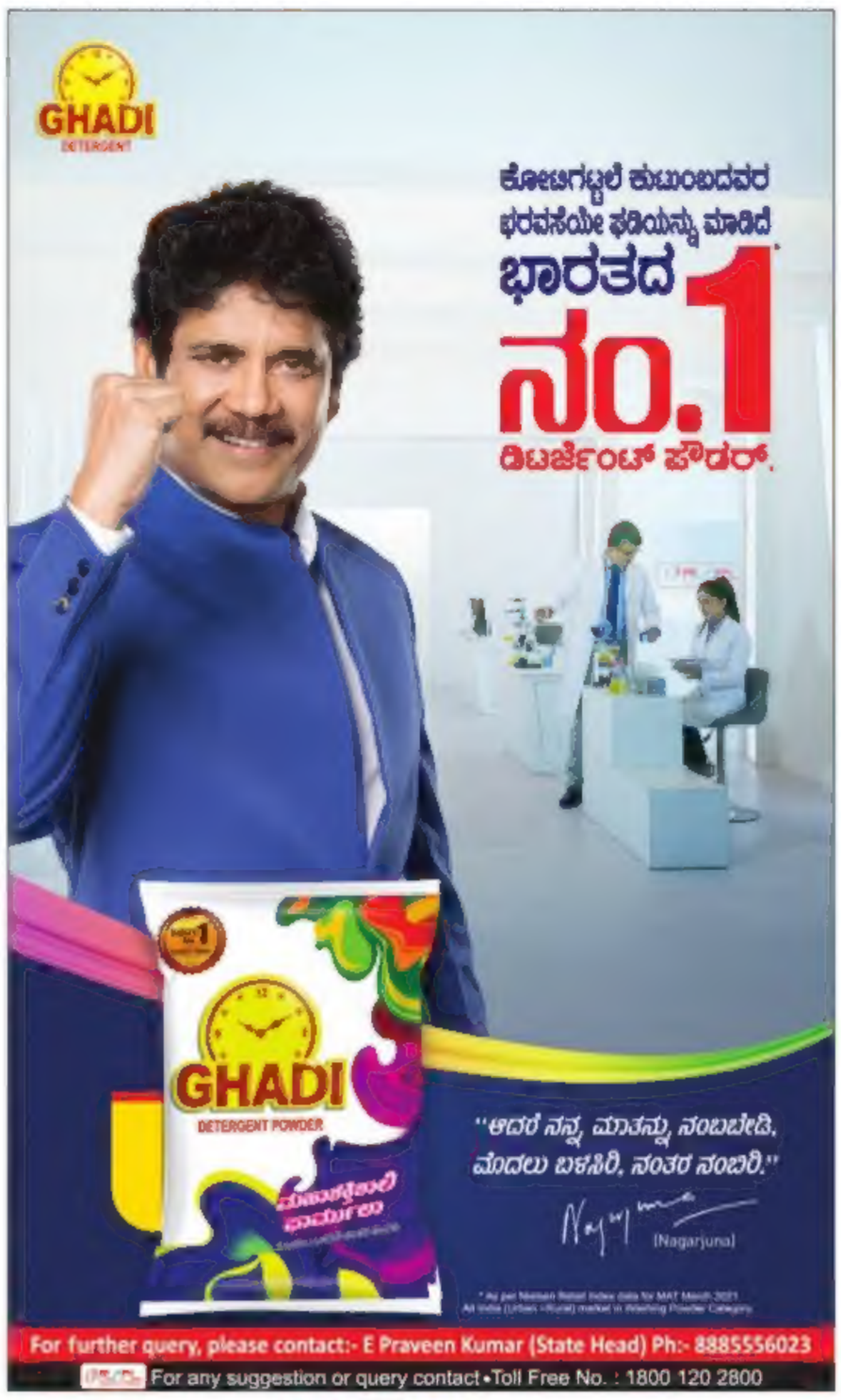
EXPRESS READ

Gulab weakens, death toll in AP rises to 2

Amaravati: Cyclone Gulab, which crossed the Bay of Bengal coast near Kalingapatnam on Sunday night, weakened into a depression and caused widespread rains in several districts of Andhra Pradesh on Monday, with the death toll rising to two | P7

EC seeks report on Bhabanipur incident

Kolkata: The Election Commission has sought a report from the West Bengal Government, after BJP national VP Dilip Ghosh was heckled on Monday by alleged TMC supporters in Bhabanipur, from where CM Mamata Banerjee is contesting | P10



What nature paints blue, tourists dab with dirt

Swathes of neelakurinji flowers blanket the landscape at Kote Betta in Kodagu district (above); The hill littered with plastic bottles, polythene bags and food wrappers (right) | EXPRESS

PRAJNA GR @ Madikeri

WHAT is it with us! As people we don't seem to respect nature, culture, heritage and all things important to us.

The hilly and scenic Kodagu recently had the rare neelakurinji blooming at Kote Betta in Garvale village, a lesser-known pilgrimage spot in the district. No sooner than the news of flowering that occurs once in 12 years got out, the flood of tourists started. Within days, it was not the flowers that could be seen at the spot, but the litter of plastic covers and bottles, cigarette butts, beer cans and empty whiskey bottles.

The tourists did not even bother to remember that it was also a place of piety where people from seven villages in the area come to perform weekly pujas at the Eshwara temple on the hillock. Villagers said that some tourists have also consumed liquor on the premises of the temple, hurting their sentiments.

To put an end to the menace, the local temple committee erected a gate on the road leading to Kote Betta recently. They are collecting entry fees from tourists, while also cautioning them against the consumption of alcohol, smoking and littering. ₹100 is being charged for a four-wheeler and ₹50 for a two-wheeler. But this has given way to local politics, with some villagers arguing that the authority to collect the entry fee lies with the panchayat and not the temple committee.

Another set of villagers oppose the premises being developed as a tourist spot.

On Monday, local MLA Appachu Ranjan, along with police and forest officials, held a meeting with the villagers, temple committee and panchayat members.

CONTINUED ON: P7